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STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
STATE BOARD OF MARRIAGE  
COUNSELOR EXAMINERS AND STATE  
BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUSPENSION )  
OR REVOCATION OF THE LICENSE OF: )

SUZANNE J. ZIPES )  
License No: SC 001780 )  
License No: FI 00771 )

Administrative Action

CONSENT ORDER

TO PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK AND )  
MARRIAGE COUNSELING IN THE )  
STATE OF NEW JERSEY )

This matter was opened to the State Board of Social Work Examiners and State Board of Marriage Counselor Examiners upon receipt of information pertaining to Ms. Zipes' professional interactions with patients K.B., C.P., L.H. and L.S. L.S. was a client seen directly by Ms. Zipes. The remaining individuals were seen by an employee of Ms. Zipes who provided counseling under

Ms. Zipes' supervision. With the consent of both Boards, the Attorney General, and counsel for Ms. Zipes, the materials pertaining to these clients were provided to an expert mutually agreed upon by all parties. That expert provided the Boards with an analysis of the documentation and her ultimate opinion.

The joint expert reviewed Ms. Zipes' professional supervision of her employee who rendered counseling services to K.B., C.P., and L.H. and concluded in each instance that Ms. Zipes had failed to adhere to accepted standards of practice as either a marriage and family therapist or a social worker. Primarily, the expert found that the records maintained by the counselor were inadequate and that Ms. Zipes' notes of supervision were largely inadequate or absent. Further, in some instances the counselor's treatment of the clients was inadequate and Ms. Zipes failed to remedy that inadequacy through her supervision.

With regard to L.S., a client personally treated by Ms. Zipes, the expert found that Ms. Zipes engaged in an impermissible dual-relationship with L.S. when Ms. Zipes purchased cosmetic items from L.S. and discussed her own personal matters in the course of therapy sessions with L.S. The expert also found that Ms. Zipes had failed to obtain L.S.'s consent to the observation of one of her therapy sessions by a student.

The Boards adopt the expert's opinion in toto and find that Respondent's professional practice grossly deviated from accepted standards of practice in both professions as discussed above and in

the expert's report to the parties. The Board further adopts the experts conclusion that Ms. Zipes has held herself out as "Suzanne Zipes, Ph.D." in professional settings in reliance upon a degree awarded by an unaccredited institution, in violation of N.J.A.C. 13:34-2.1(12).

Respondent being desirous of resolving this matter without the need for further formal proceedings, and the Board having found that the within disposition is adequately protected of the public health, safety and welfare,

IT IS ON THIS 11<sup>th</sup> DAY OF February, 1999  
ORDERED:

1. Effective upon the filing date of the within Order, Respondent shall voluntarily cease and desist from all professional practice requiring licensure as either a social worker or a marriage and family therapist for a minimum period of two (2) years. In no event, however, shall Respondent resume practice until she has satisfactorily completed the re-education requirements set forth in paragraph 4 below.

2. Respondent shall pay \$2,000 in investigative costs due and owing upon filing of the within Order.

3. Respondent shall pay \$8,000 in civil penalties (\$2,000 per client), due and owing upon the filing of the within Order.

4. Respondent shall commence a program of re-education which shall entail successful completion of 100 credit hours in addition to the biannual 20 credit hours of continuing education required by

the regulations of the Board of Social Work Examiners. The course work shall be allocated as follows:

A. 20% to ethical awareness.

B. 10% to clinical supervision.

C. 50% to clinical practice.

D. 20% to miscellaneous clinical issues and/or record keeping.

All course work shall be subject to Board preapproval which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld. Each Board shall appoint a single member to serve as liaison for the purposes of reviewing Respondent's proposed program of re-education.

5. Upon resumption of professional practice under the terms of this Order, respondent shall refrain from supervision of other professionals pending further order of both Boards.

6. Upon resumption of professional practice, Respondent shall be supervised by an individual subject to approval by both Boards. The nature and terms of this supervision shall be ordered by the Boards at the time Respondent identifies the proposed supervisor. At a minimum, supervision shall include videotaping of client sessions, review of records and scheduled meetings with the supervisor. Said supervision shall remain in place pending further order of the Boards.

7. Respondent shall permanently refrain from the use of the Ph.D. credential in professional settings in New Jersey, until such

time as she achieves said degree at an accredited institution recognized in the State.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF  
MARRIAGE COUNSELOR EXAMINERS

By: Ronald K. Walthall  
Ronald Walthall  
President

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD  
OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

By: Mary Agnes Lattimer  
Mary Agnes Lattimer  
President

I have read the terms of the within Order. I understand the terms of the Order and I agree to comply with them. Consent is hereby given to the entry of the Order.

Suzanne J. Zipes  
Suzanne J. Zipes

Consent is hereby given to the entry of this Order.

John P. Dizzia, Esq.  
John P. Dizzia, Esq.  
Attorney for Respondent